

## Braiding

As you sleep, I gather  
your hair. Each strand  
so thin it spills from  
my hands like wet  
clay through your hands  
when you showed me  
how to braid glass  
into clay you glazed  
brown and blue with  
copper, named it earth  
and sky. Clay that was  
moistened, molded,  
and stretched into flat  
plains and hollow  
hemispheres, into  
the earth broken  
open and drained  
of its oceans, emptied  
of coral reefs, dolphins,  
and shipwrecks leaving  
behind only shards  
of glass that catch and  
release the sun in my eyes.  
Clay you fired in the kiln  
that would incinerate  
your hair that keeps  
falling from my hands,  
from this loose braid  
tumbling down your neck  
until you wake, your hair  
in knots, my fingers tangled  
and tangling in your hair  
until slowly, you reach  
behind your head, place  
your hands on mine,  
and guide them through  
your hair, untangling  
the mess I've made,  
knot by knot, strand  
by strand, and we unravel.